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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Indianapolis wins America in Bloom award!**

Indianapolis was awarded the 2003 America in Bloom (AIB) national beautification award in the over 500,000 population category Saturday at the 2003 America in Bloom Educational Symposium and Awards Ceremony held in Chicago. Additionally, Indianapolis was honored with two special awards for community involvement both in our population category and throughout Canada and participating U.S. cities. AIB is a national beautification program committed to fostering civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community participation and the challenge of a friendly competition among participating communities across the country. Indianapolis competed and won over Boston and Monroe County (Rochester), NY.

"We are honored to receive this national award recognizing the beauty of our city and our exceptional quality of life," said Mayor Bart Peterson. "It is a tribute to those people and organizations who work every day to make Indianapolis a desirable place to live, work and visit."

Indianapolis was recognized overall for floral displays, landscapes, turf and open spaces, urban forestry, community involvement, heritage conservation, environmental awareness and tidiness.

Two judges came to Indianapolis July 26 - 29 and took a two and a half day extensive tour visiting more than 40 of Indianapolis' sites including Eagle Creek Park, public and private gardens, Adopt-A-Median sites, White River State Park, Downtown Central Canal, renovated homes, Monument Circle, Ft. Harrison State Park, Monon Trail and many others.

Local host organizations included The City of Indianapolis - Indy Parks and Recreation, Indianapolis Convention & Visitors Association, Indianapolis Downtown, Inc. and the AIB local organizing committee comprised of many 'greening' members in the community.

Jason Kissel, natural resources manager for Indy Parks & Recreation and Anne Maschmeyer, beautification manager for IDI accepted the award on behalf of the City of Indianapolis.

"We are so pleased that our sustained community efforts and vision of a clean and beautiful city has earned us national recognition as a role model," said Maschmeyer. "The local 'green' community really pulled together for this and presented a compelling story about the collective horticultural efforts happening in the Indianapolis community that enhance the quality of life for our residents, employees and visitors."

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